

**Washington, DC** – Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore) today passed through the U.S. House of Representatives two public safety and environmental amendments to the Defense Authorization Act. The provisions will help reduce the impact of unexploded ordnance (UXOs) and munitions on public health and the environment, saving money and increasing security. Congressman Blumenauer founded and co-chairs the bipartisan Unexploded Ordnance Caucus. “For years I have been working to ensure that the U.S. government does all it can to protect our communities from weapons and chemicals left over from military training,” said Congressman Blumenauer. “This means both requiring the military to clean up after itself and reducing the creation of hazardous weapons waste in the first place. It’s hard to imagine anything worse than a child stumbling upon a weapon that could still be active. By requiring the Secretary of Defense to issue specific recommendations for reducing the full life-cycle costs of weapons, we can save money and find ways to protect people and the environment from unintended consequences.”

## **BACKGROUND**

Both amendments are part of Rep. Blumenauer’s continuing efforts to reduce the environmental impacts of military operations.

The first amendment would require the Secretary of Defense to develop methods to account for the full life-cycle costs of munitions, including cost of disposal. The Defense Department would be required to report to Congress – within 180 days – recommendations for reducing these costs, unexploded ordnance, and munitions-constituent contamination. This amendment is the first time the DoD will be required to take a look at how munitions are developed and how they are used, in order to reduce the very real and very serious environmental contamination and danger to civilians.

The second amendment would require the Defense Secretary, in the Defense budget submission, to include funding levels for Military Munitions Response Program. This program manages and cleans over 3,500 contaminated sites nationwide. Increasing transparency of funding levels will empower Congress and the American people to hold the Department accountable for results.

For Immediate Release

June 25, 2009

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